



CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

CITY PLANNING BOARD

ROOM 304, WATERTOWN CITY HALL
245 WASHINGTON STREET
WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601-3380
(315) 785-7740

MEETING: August 4, 2015

PRESENT:

Sara Freda, Chairperson
Michelle Capone
Larry Coburn
Linda Fields
Neil Katzman
Anthony Neddo

ALSO:

Michael A. Lumbis, Planner
Jeffrey Polkowski, Planner
Geoffrey Urda, Planner
Brian Drake, Civil Engineer II

ABSENT:

None

The August 4, 2015 Planning Board Meeting was called to order at 3:03 PM by Planning Board Chair Sara Freda. Ms. Freda called for a reading of the Minutes from the June 2, 2015 Planning Board Meeting. Ms. Fields made a motion to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Coburn and all voted in favor.

SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL VL-3 MARBLE STREET – PARCEL # 4-27-402.100

The Planning Board then considered a request for subdivision final plat approval submitted by the City of Watertown for a two-lot subdivision of VL-3 Marble Street, Parcel Number 4-27-402.100. Mr. Drake was in attendance to represent the City before the Planning Board.

Ms. Freda then opened discussion on the subdivision request, but she noted that a public hearing on the matter had been scheduled for 3:05 PM, and that she would read the public hearing notice at that time.

Mr. Drake began by referencing the request for site plan approval on this same parcel that was scheduled as the next item on the Planning Board agenda. Mr. Drake mentioned that the applicant in this case had originally applied for a waiver of site plan approval, which the Planning Board declined at its June 2, 2015 meeting.

Mr. Drake then said that when the City Engineering Department received the initial application for a waiver of site plan approval in May, Staff at that time received a survey of the property and realized that a portion of the street pavement encroached onto the property.

Following that discovery, the City decided that this was an appropriate time to address the situation. Mr. Drake said that in speaking with the site plan applicant, Ron England, who is also the parcel owner, that Mr. England was agreeable to transferring the portion of land in the street to the City. Subsequently, the proposed subdivision map and property descriptions were prepared by Storino Geomatics. Mr. Drake then referred to the proposed subdivision map and noted that Parcel 1 was the portion of the land that was in the street and was the portion of the property that would be subdivided and deeded to the City. This would effectively take the pavement off Mr. England's property.

Ms. Freda then asked Mr. Drake if the City would have to combine the newly created parcel with the street. Mr. Drake replied that that was the ultimate goal, but that it may be prohibitively costly at this time as there were issues finding the appropriate monuments.

Ms. Freda then reiterated that a Public Hearing was required for the subdivision. She then called the Public Hearing to order at 3:07 PM. She began by reading the legal notice that had been published in the *Watertown Daily Times*. Ms. Freda then asked for public comments on the request. Hearing no comments, Ms. Freda closed the Public Hearing at 3:08 PM.

Ms. Freda then asked if any Planning Board members had any other questions for the applicant. The Planning Board had no further questions.

Ms. Freda then stated that the Planning Board would have to answer the questions on Part 2 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form (EAF), since the Planning Board was acting as the lead agency in this matter. The Planning Board answered "No" to all questions.

Ms. Fields then made a motion to accept the board's answers to Part 2 of the Short EAF and issue a Negative Declaration for the proposed subdivision according to the requirements of SEQRA. Mr. Coburn seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Ms. Capone then moved to grant final subdivision plat approval for the request submitted by the City of Watertown for a two-lot subdivision of Parcel Number 4-27-402.100, known as VL-3 Marble Street. The motion was seconded by Ms. Fields and all voted in favor.

SITE PLAN APPROVAL VL-3 MARBLE STREET – PARCEL # 4-27-402.100

The Planning Board then considered a request for site plan approval submitted by Ron England on behalf of Al's Siding for the construction of a 1,659 square foot building at VL-3 Marble Street, Parcel Number 4-27-402.100. Edward Olley of GYMO PC and Ron England of Al's Siding were in attendance to represent Al's Siding before the Planning Board.

Mr. Olley began by saying that he had read Staff's memorandum of review on the site plan application and drew attention to the Engineering comments. Mr. Olley noted that the survey maps provided by Storino Geomatics show two entrances to the site currently. Mr. Olley then said that these entrances are more conceptual than anything else, and that you can access the site from anywhere as it is now.

Mr. Olley said that he and the applicant understand the City's desire to delineate access points to the property, but that they wanted to wait for the subdivision of the parcel to be official before moving forward with any such delineation. He then said that he and the applicant agree that the locations identified on the survey were the best places for access points.

Mr. Olley said that all of the work to delineate the access points is in the street margin and that part of an agreement between the City and the applicant should be how to handle moving the property line, setting the pins and paving an access lane in and out of the site. Mr. Olley then suggested that it should be the City's responsibility to perform this work and designate these access points in some way.

Mr. Olley noted that Staff suggested that a grassed median be planted along the street margin, but reiterated the applicant's claim that there was not any topsoil in this space and that the area was unable to support any plant growth. He then said that he thought that boulders and/or other large rocks could be placed along the margin, or perhaps concrete and chains, but that he and the applicant would like to leave the decision up to the City.

Mr. Olley then addressed the summary item on Staff's memorandum that contour lines needed to be added to the site plan. He said that there were contour lines on the parcel survey provided by Storino Geometrics. He also mentioned that since the City Code Enforcement Bureau had previously issued a building permit in error, another permit would have to be re-issued, unless the current halt in construction was only the result of a stop-work order.

Mr. Katzman, who was late arriving to the meeting joined at this time, approximately 3:20 PM.

Ms. Freda then referenced the summary item on Staff's memorandum requiring contour lines on the site plan, and asked Mr. Olley why there were contour lines only on the survey, and why the applicant had not added contour lines to the site plan as Staff requested. Mr. Coburn noted that the site looked flat.

Ms. Olley replied that no contour lines were included on the site plan because there was no drainage to compute.

Ms. Freda responded that it is a requirement of the site plan application process that contour lines be on the site plan. She then asked Mr. Olley about the lack of a photometric plan and a landscaping plan.

Mr. Olley then addressed photometrics, and directed the Planning Board's attention to the Proposed Project Engineering Report included in the cover letter for the site plan application. Mr. Olley said that report describes building-mounted lights and their footcandle outputs, which he then read from the report.

Ms. Freda then recapped the history of this application, noting that the applicant had previously applied for a waiver of site plan approval, which the Planning Board deemed inappropriate, and which resulted in the full site plan application now before the Planning Board.

Ms. Freda said that she wished to state for the record that this site plan was missing several requirements; specifically a photometric plan, landscaping plan, floor plan, building elevations and contour lines on the site plan. She reiterated that she was just noting these for the record.

Mrs. Fields then asked if there would be any signage on the site. Mr. England answered that there would not be any signage. In reference to the lack of drawn building elevations, Mr. Olley added that a photographic image was included with the application depicting what the proposed building was intended to look like.

Mr. Coburn asked if the Planning Board could grant site plan approval on the condition that the applicant adds contour lines to the site plan and address the other outstanding summary items in Staff's memorandum. Ms. Freda then asked Mr. Lumbis about landscaping requirements.

Mr. Lumbis said that Staff had looked at the site, and given some of the constraints such as exposed bedrock, conceded that it would be very difficult to get formal plantings such as shrubs and trees to grow there. He added that he did think that it would be possible to get a grassed median to grow with a little topsoil, but that something as large as street trees would be difficult.

Mr. England said that the entire site was bedrock. Mr. Olley then said that it was the City's property now anyway. Mr. Drake responded that it was not the City's property yet, as the subdivision had yet to be filed with the County Clerk. Mr. Olley granted that point to Mr. Drake, but added that as he understood it, the transfer of property was contingent upon site plan approval. Mr. Drake said that he had spoken with the City Engineer, and that he had told Mr. Drake that a grassed median was not something that the City was interested in installing. Mr. Olley then said that a certain amount of negotiation between the City and the property owner was necessary.

Ms. Fields said that she still had concerns about landscaping, but that she understood the limitations of the property. Mr. Katzman acknowledged that the existing conditions of the site are still an improvement over what it looked like before Mr. England acquired the property. Mr. Olley added that the inside corner of the parcel, the area between the two access points identified on the survey, was where snow storage was planned to occur.

Ms. Capone then noted that it seemed as though a lot of outstanding issues had been resolved since the applicant's previous appearance before the Planning Board to get down to the remaining four summary items. Mr. Drake said that the main problem before was that the previous application was submitted as a request for a waiver of site plan approval and that a regular site plan approval could not be granted when all the applicant applied for was a waiver.

Mr. Katzman then asked if the Planning Board could approve the current application with the four summary items as contingencies. Mr. Lumbis replied that the Planning Board might not want to grant such an approval with Summary Item 1 written as it is, referencing the requirement for a grassed median. Mr. Lumbis said "grass" should be stricken unless the Planning Board feels differently, but reiterated the need for an approved median.

Mr. Katzman agreed that a median was still necessary, even if it were not made of grass, and looked at the summary items on his copy of the memorandum. Mr. Katzman then made a motion recommending that City Council approve the site plan submitted by Ron England on behalf of Al's Siding for the construction of a 1,659 square foot building at VL-3 Marble Street, Parcel Number 4-27-402.100 contingent upon the following.

1. The applicant shall provide an approved median between the existing edge of pavement and the property line along the entire street frontage of the property, excluding the driveway openings, to delineate the driveway access points and to provide an area for snow storage.
2. The site plan shall be amended to show existing and proposed contours at 1' intervals and labeled with appropriate spot elevations. Existing contours should be dashed.
3. The applicant shall address all concerns of the City Engineering Department prior to the issuance of any permits.
4. The applicant shall obtain the following permits prior to any further construction: a Building Permit and a City Permit for any work within the City right-of-way.

Ms. Freda asked if Summary Item 1 could be reworded to require the approval of the Engineering Department. Mr. Drake replied that Summary Item 3 covered that. The motion was then seconded by Ms. Fields and all voted in favor. Mr. Lumbis then said that the application would go before City Council on August 17, 2015 for their consideration.

Ms. Freda then asked if the applicant would be required to resubmit his site plan prior to his application being heard by City Council. Mr. Olley stated that he did not believe so. Mr. Lumbis said that it was all right if the applicant did not resubmit all his materials before City Council considered his application.

Mr. Olley then said that the basic problem was that the City Code Enforcement Bureau issued a Building Permit in error and the partially constructed building is now out there in the elements causing the owner costs that he did not plan on. He said that the City Code Enforcement Bureau had refused to lift the stop-work order until the applicant obtained site plan approval from the Planning Board. He continued, and said that now there will be another two-week delay until City Council approval is obtained, and asked if there was some way that the City Code Enforcement Bureau could lift the stop-work order any earlier.

Mr. Katzman asked if the Planning Board could make any recommendations to that effect. Ms. Freda answered no, and said that such a decision was solely up to the City Code Enforcement Bureau. Ms. Freda then recommended that the property owner consult with Planning Staff before doing anything else in the future, and that doing so would save a lot of time and money.

REPORT ON MUNICIPAL SEPARATED STORM SEWER PROGRAM

The Planning Board then heard a report from Michael Sligar, Superintendant of Water for the City of Watertown. Mr. Sligar opened by saying that he asked to be put on the Planning Board agenda to explain to the Planning Board what the Municipal Separated Storm Sewer System Program was and why the Board needed to know about it.

Mr. Sligar gave a brief history of sewers and sewage treatment in the history of Watertown, dating back to the 1960s. He then discussed the Combined Sewer Overflow Program, which ended a few years ago, and added that the City of Watertown has reached a threshold of stormwater runoff capture that met the purpose and intent of that program.

Mr. Sligar then drew the Planning Board's attention to a map of the Watertown-Fort Drum urbanized area, as defined by the 2010 United States Census. He said that this area, of which the City of Watertown was a part, had reached a population density threshold that necessitated it to meet the requirements of the Municipal Separated Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program. Mr. Sligar then recounted the last two years worth of discussion among the ten entities that are identified in the Jefferson County Storm Sewer System to set up a coalition group.

Mr. Sligar said that a major intent of the program is to address the issue of how stormwater runoff picks up things like plastic, cigarette butts, etc. and the need to do something about these things before they reach the Black River, and that was a major part of what he wanted the Planning Board to take away from his report.

Mr. Sligar then said that there were six Minimum Control Measures (MCMs) identified in the program. They are:

1. Public Education and Outreach on Stormwater
2. Public Involvement and Participation
3. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
4. Construction Site Runoff Control
5. Post Construction Stormwater Management
6. Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations

Mr. Katzman asked about shopping centers that don't maintain their drainage lagoons or cut their grass. Mr. Sligar said that all reasonable things should be done to prevent the types of things that caused this to be a measure in the first place.

Ms. Capone asked which City department is in charge of monitoring this. Mr. Sligar replied that once a local law is drafted, that many departments will share the responsibility, each charged with enforcing different parts of the law.

Mr. Sligar then said that the biggest reason that he wanted to talk to the Planning Board was that the program needed a base body that met regularly, was open to the public, had an agenda and had minutes. He said that he had already given the same report to the Black River Committee and asked for their participation. He then said that he was not asking either the

Planning Board or the Black River Committee to go it alone, but asked if the two groups could work together, and among their respective members, come up with this base body.

The Planning Board members agreed to take this under consideration. Ms. Freda then moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Fields and all voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 4:08 PM.